HRNJ-Uganda report points to deterioration in media freedom

A Press Freedom Index Report released by the Human Rights Network for Journalists-Uganda (HRNJ-Uganda) has indicated that the space for the media in Uganda is rapidly "shrinking and sinking" due to increasing levels of attacks, especially by the police.

HRNJ-Uganda documented 107 cases of attacks on journalists in 2011 compared to 58 in 2010 and 38 in 2009. The incidents range from shootings, physical attacks, unlawful arrests and detention, incarceration of journalists, denying the media access to news scenes, confiscation of equipment, defective and tramped up charges, to verbal threats.

The report includes photographs of two journalists who were shot while covering news events. Christine Nabatanzi, a reporter with Radio Simba, was shot in the leg while covering Democratic Party supporters who were celebrating the release of their party president from prison, while Capital FM/Beat FM reporter Gideon Tugume was shot when covering the return of the opposition FDC leader's return to the country from Nairobi, in May.

The abuses happen countrywide under different commands from within the security. This clearly shows that press freedom remains elusive for many journalists seeking to enjoy these freedoms in the course of their work.

Increasingly, journalists are being targeted and attacked, injured, threatened and their property vandalized by mainly the police and army.

Read the full story on www.ifex.org.

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